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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 4785
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHRC/USDA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ASHGABAT 000170

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, EEB
ANKARA FOR AGRICULTURE COUNSELOR
USDA FOR GERARD AND FREITAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [SOCI](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: FACULTY EXCHANGE PROGRAM: MEETING WITH THE RECTOR OF
TURKMEN AGRICULTURE UNIVERSITY

REF: (A) 08 Ashgabat 787 (B) 08 Ashgabat 1648

1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

2. (U) ACTION REQUEST: THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST. See para. 8.

3. (SBU) SUMMARY: Agriculture University Rector, Gurbandurdy Mammedgulyev, agreed to arrange classes for Faculty Exchange Program-sponsored University of Nevada, Reno professors due to arrive in Turkmenistan in mid-February. The Rector recommended that the seminar series begin with an introduction to the U.S. agriculture sector, economy, and even the current political situation and the new administration. Mammedgulyev showed interest in other U.S. programs that his students and staff could take part in. Post would be grateful for guidance on technology and equipment needed by the professors for their presentations during their visit.
END SUMMARY.

CLARIFICATION OF THE SEMINAR SCHEDULE

4. (SBU) On January 30, Rector of Turkmen Agriculture University, Gurbandurdy Mammedgulyev, agreed to the proposed dates of February 13-25 for the visit of University of Nevada, Reno College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources professors, Stanley Johnson and Rangesan Narayanan. Mammedgulyev noted that February 19 is a non-working day because Flag Day is a national holiday. The Rector assigned Deputy Rector, Dovlet Muradov, to draft a schedule of lectures based on Post's proposal of a combination of morning/afternoon/evening classes, which will not exceed six hours per day. The rector offered to arrange a small class of about 50 people or a big class consisting of up to 200 people. The Rector noted the need for advance notice of equipment or technology needs -- other than a blackboard -- that would be used to make presentations.

RECTOR RECOMMENDS INTRODUCTORY SEMINAR ON U.S. POLICY

5. (SBU) Mammedgulyev recommended that the professors begin the lecture series with an introduction to the U.S. agriculture sector, economy, and even the current political situation and the new administration. He also expressed interest in having a question and

answer session. The Rector himself wanted to ask some questions about U.S. plans to engage with Afghanistan and its implications on relations between United States and Turkmenistan.

RECTOR SHOWS INTEREST IN USG EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

¶6. (SBU) The Rector said that the University will nominate economics teachers with no English language skills, and teachers in other fields with some English skills, for the Faculty Exchange Program (FEP). U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Program Specialist, Edward Gerard, will interview the nominees during his visit on March 25-27. In response to Mammedgulyev's question about other USG-sponsored programs with pertinence for the University, Economic Officer described the Cochran Fellowship and U.S. Department of Commerce Special American Business and Internship Training (SABIT) program. The Rector also asked about various majors offered at the University of Nevada, Reno, College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources.

¶7. (SBU) COMMENT: Turkmen, like people in most places, are proud of their country and culture. In that light, the Rector's comment "when foreigners come here, they expect it to be like Africa" reflected a sense of wounded pride, perhaps associated with past visits by foreign guests. Given this sensitivity it would be best to avoid any comments that suggest deficiencies in Turkmen abilities, practices and knowledge. A point of contention in future discussions concerning Turkmen participation in the Faculty Exchange Program will certainly be the length of the Turkmen's stay in the U.S. In the past Ministry officials have insisted that participants can stay in the U.S. for three months at the very most (reftels).
END COMMENT.

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¶8. ACTION REQUEST: Please approach USDA for guidance on equipment needs of Professor Johnson and Narayanan.

MILES